

Motivation Formula

13. *Smartest Student in Class*

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Object lesson

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: This ice-breaking activity demonstrates that confidence and positive self-talk can bring about satisfying results.

Materials: (The printed materials below can be found at www.whytry.org/activities.)

- 1 piece of letter-size cardstock paper with a big question mark (?)
- 1 piece of letter-size cardstock paper with a big "NO"
- 3 sheets of paper with a picture of a pig on each sheet
- 1 sheet protector

Activity:

To set up the activity, put the two pieces of cardstock paper inside the sheet protector, so that the question mark is visible on one side and the word "NO" is visible on the other. In between these two sheets, place the three pig pictures.

Ask, by raise of hands, "Who is the smartest person in the group?" Invite your volunteer to come forward. Holding the sheet protector close to your body, show the question mark side to the group. Ask the volunteer, "Do you know the word on the other side of this sheet?" When the volunteer responds, "No," turn the sheet over to reveal "NO." Say, "You are the smartest kid in class!"

Then put your hand inside the sheet protector out of view of the volunteer and ask, "Think of a number between one and five." When they give their answer, pull out your fingers to match their answer. Say, "You really are the smartest!"

Now comes the final test. Ask the volunteer to think of an animal. Regardless of the response, pull out one of the pigs and show it to the group. Repeat the question two more times until all the pig cards are shown. Usually the volunteer will catch on and guess "Pig."

Processing the Experience:

- How did you feel when I asked, "Who is the smartest kid in the class?" If I asked again, would you volunteer? Why or why not?
- What positive self-talk did our volunteer use?
- Why is positive self-talk important?
- How can we use positive self-talk to respond to our challenges? Is it easy or hard to be positive in the face of challenges?
- What are some challenges we do not have control over? How can we respond?
- What are some challenges we can control? How can we respond to these?